

HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE

Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
House of Representatives

ARTIFICIAL REEFS

Artificial reefs, usually composed of maritime vessels or concrete structures, provide an ideal habitat for marine life to propagate and proliferate --- thus enhancing fish populations, marine ecosystems and recreational opportunities for the surrounding ocean area.

Prior to a scrapped vessel being sunk and utilized as a reef structure, it must be sufficiently remediated to ensure that no pollutants remain. This remediation procedure is quite costly. To offset such costs, a program has been established by the US Department of Transportation's Federal Maritime Administration to provide federal funds to states that plan to create artificial reefs. If the State of Hawaii is able to obtain such funds, the use of scrapped maritime vessels will become economically viable.

One area that would benefit significantly from the installation of an artificial reef is the Waianae Coast on the island of Oahu. Rep. Shimabukuro introduced a resolution in the 2005 Hawaii State Legislature that would encourage the state Department of Land and Natural Resources to designate Waianae as the initial (pilot) location for sinking any acquired scrapped federal ship for the purpose of establishing an artificial reef.

Rep. Shimabukuro also requested congressional appropriations through the office of Hawaii Congressman Ed Case that would fund the clean up of two ships provided through the federal Maritime Administration program for use in the proposed Waianae project.

As an area that is frequented by many recreational and commercial fishing boats, Waianae is in need of establishing additional means of maintaining and hopefully increasing its fish and marine life population.

In addition, the establishment of more artificial reefs in the area may assist in the creation of additional surf breaks and the curtailment of beach erosion.

Aloha,



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